

The Gideon Granger House
Canandaigua, Ontario County
New York

HABS-No. 5-R-2

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HABS
NY,
35-CANDA,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 2, New York State

Historic American Buildings Survey
Walter H. Cussebeer, District Officer
84 Exchange Street, Rochester, N. Y.

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Jedon Granger House
295 North Main Street
Canandaigua, Ontario County
New York

HABS
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2.

Owner: Congregational ministers (?)

Date of Erection: 183- (B. 183?)

Architect: Thomas Jefferson (?)

Builder: No record

Present Condition:

Number of Stories: Three

Materials of Construction: Wood

Other Existing Records: See text; see "Architecture",
December, 1916; "White Pine", vol. IV, no 5;
Georgia Period, part 5, plate 4.

Additional Data: See following page

N.Y.
35-CANADA
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THE GRANGER HOMESTEAD

Canandaigua, N.Y.

The family is of English descent, their ancestor, Launcelot Granger, having come to this country from England in 1652 and settled at Newbury, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Thence he removed to Suffield, Conn., in 1674, and here Gideon Granger was born July 19, 1767, the first of the name to make his home in Canandaigua. We are not familiar with the details of his early life, except that he was given opportunity to obtain a liberal education, of which he availed himself, graduating from Yale College in 1787, at the age of twenty. He entered upon the study of the law soon afterward, and rose to distinction in the bar of his native State. He was a man of public spirit, and imbued with the Jeffersonian principles of free government. He was early and deeply impressed with the importance of the most energetic work for the advancement of the public school system, and was one of the foremost laborers for the establishment of the public school fund in Connecticut, giving liberally himself towards its foundation, and being often called its father. While still a young man his reputation had reached the national capital, and in 1801, when he was thirty-five years of age, he was called by President Jefferson to take a position in his cabinet as postmaster-general. For thirteen years he filled that honorable and responsible office, during which period he was instrumental in the rapid development of the great postal system of the country. His administration of the office continued through both of Mr. Jefferson's terms as president, and most of Mr. Madison's. On his retirement from Washington in 1814, he settled in Canandaigua, whither his reputation had preceded him, and where he was at once accorded the station to which his abilities entitled him. In 1820 he was elected to the State Senate, and in that body served two years. He promptly took a leading position as a legislator, and became conspicuous in co-operation with Governor De Witt Clinton in promoting the great system of internal improvements of which the Erie Canal was the most important feature. In 1821 he retired from public life, and died on the 31st day of December, 1822, at the comparatively early age of fifty-five years, leaving a record of a career distinguished for its purity, its spotless integrity, and its devotion to the public good.

In the years of 1814 and 1815, Gideon Granger, Postmaster General under Thomas Jefferson, and one of the most famous early lawyers of Ontario County, built a family mansion at Canandaigua from plans given him by Thomas Jefferson upon his return from France.

The lumber was drawn by oxen from the Genesee Valley and the bricks were made on the property.

The site of the mansion is the grounds used by troops for barracks during the War of 1812.

The mansion here erected was maintained in all its beauty and desirability for many years, and in 1876 became an institution of learning, for the especial use of young ladies under the name of the Granger Place School, but is now used as a home of retired Congregational ministers.

Ruth A. Benson - HISTORIAN.

Reviewed 1936, H.C.F.